

# Measure Up

Spring 2008

Assessment news for elementary school teachers



## Facts About NAEP 2009

- Almost 10,000 elementary schools have been selected to participate in NAEP 2009.
- From January 26 to March 6, 2009, over 520,000 fourth-graders will take the NAEP assessment in reading, mathematics, or science.
- Over 6,000 NAEP staff will administer NAEP 2009 to students in grades 4, 8, and 12 nationwide.

## NAEP Questions: What Are Fourth-Grade Students Asked?

In 2008 and 2009, fourth-graders selected to take NAEP answer reading, mathematics, or science questions. Items are written and reviewed by educators and content specialists nationwide. NAEP asks both multiple-choice and constructed-response questions. Teachers can access released NAEP items, sample student responses, scorer's commentary, and performance data for students nationwide.

Listed below are some examples of multiple-choice fourth-grade NAEP items.

### ■ Reading Question

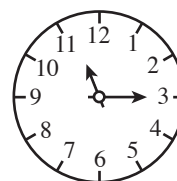
What does the word "pleading" mean, as it is used in the sentence below?

*"Ducks," she said again, her eyes pleading.*

- A) Yelling
- B) Begging
- C) Looking
- D) Blinking

Nationally, 53% of students selected the correct answer, B.

### ■ Mathematics Question

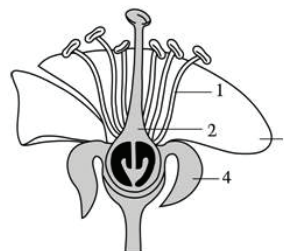


The clock shows the time that Bill leaves his house in the morning. He returns 6 hours and 25 minutes later. At what time does he return?

- A) 5:15 A.M.
- B) 5:40 A.M.
- C) 5:15 P.M.
- D) 5:40 P.M.

Nationally, 49% of students selected the correct answer, D.

### ■ Science Question



Which two numbers in the picture above of a flower show the male and female parts?

- A) 1 and 2
- B) 2 and 3
- C) 2 and 4
- D) 3 and 4

Nationally, 35% of students selected the correct answer, A.



## Released NAEP Items and Scoring Guides: Valuable Classroom Resources for Instruction

Released NAEP items can be a valuable instructional tool for teachers. After each assessment, NAEP releases some of the questions from the assessment. More than 2,000 questions are available at the NAEP Questions Center (<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/itmrls>).

In addition to reading, mathematics, and science questions, NAEP has also released questions for

civics, U.S. history and geography. Teachers can use the search feature for NAEP Questions at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/itmrls> to find hundreds of released NAEP questions that can be used for a variety of purposes.

Below is one example of a thought-provoking civics question that can be used as a springboard for classroom discussion or activities, or as a test question to assess an objective at the end of a lesson or unit.

Source: Foy, J. (2007). *NAEP Assessment Toolbox for Teachers: Easy-to-Use Classroom Activities Using Questions and Data from the National Assessment of Educational Progress*. Alaska Department of Education and Early Development, Juneau, Alaska.

### Sample grade 4 civics question

Think about what you have learned about being a good citizen. Now read the list below. For each of the three actions, tell how it would affect other people in your community.

1. Not returning library books

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2. Volunteering to help senior citizens with chores

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3. Littering

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For more information about these and other released items, visit: <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/> and select "Sample Questions."

### Scoring Guide

#### Complete

Response provides good links between three activities and impacts.

#### Acceptable

Response provides good links between two activities and impacts.

#### Partial

Response provides good link between one activity and impacts.

#### Unacceptable

Response does not establish any tie between the three actions given in the premise and the consequences for other people.

### 2006 National Performance Results:

Score	Percentage of Students
Complete	18%
Acceptable	28%
Partial	25%
Unacceptable	28%
Off task	0%
Omitted	2%
	0 100

Note:

- These results are for public and nonpublic school students.
- Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

## Sample student responses

### Complete:

#### 1. Not returning library books

*Other people might want to get the same book out and you would be stopping them from doing that.*

#### 2. Volunteering to help senior citizens with chores

*I would help other people in the community because then they do not have to use their time to do that.*

#### 3. Littering

*I could make the ground dirty, make animals sick and pollute water and kill fish.*

#### Scorer's commentary

The response provides reasonable descriptions of how each of the three actions could affect others in the community.

### Acceptable:

#### 1. Not returning library books

*Other people could really want the book that you have and if you keep it or lose it that makes them unhappy.*

#### 2. Volunteering to help senior citizens with chores

*If there is a senior citizen in your neighborhood help them with something like planting a garden or just be nice.*

#### 3. Littering

*If you leave a can in the street and someone walks by and slips on it, they could break something.*

#### Scorer's commentary

The response offers acceptable descriptions for the first and third actions, but the description for volunteering to help seniors focuses on what a volunteer could do rather than on how it would affect others in the community.

### Partial:

#### 1. Not returning library books

*One person might not get to read a book they are dying to read.*

#### 2. Volunteering to help senior citizens with chores

*It would make people tell about that person that volunteers to do senior citizens with chores.*

#### 3. Littering

*It would make people think you weren't a good citizen.*

#### Scorer's commentary

The response receives credit only for the answer to the first part. The answers to the other two parts, while perhaps true statements, do not address important community impacts that would result from the actions.

### Unacceptable:

#### 1. Not returning library books

*You would pay money and get in big trouble.*

#### 2. Volunteering to help senior citizens with chores

*You would probably get paid and people would like you.*

#### 3. Littering

*You could get arrested if you were caught.*

#### Scorer's commentary

The response receives a score of unacceptable because all three answers express what would happen to the person performing the actions rather than how other people in the community would be affected by the actions.



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## What is the Nation's Report Card™?

The Nation's Report Card™ informs the public about the academic achievement of elementary and secondary students in the United States. Report cards communicate the findings of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), a continuing and nationally representative measure of achievement in various subjects over time.

For over three decades, NAEP assessments have been conducted periodically in reading, mathematics, science, writing, U.S. history, civics, geography, and other subjects. By collecting and reporting information on student performance for the nation, states, and selected urban districts, NAEP is an integral part of our nation's evaluation of the condition and progress of education. Only information related to academic achievement and relevant variables is collected. The privacy of individual students and their families is protected, and the identities of participating schools are not released.

## If you want to...

## Visit...

**Learn** more about NAEP results

The Nation's Report Card at  
<http://nationsreportcard.gov>

**View** NAEP data for a particular state or contact your NAEP State Coordinator

The National Center for Education Statistics at  
<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/states>

**Access** specific results for a grade level, subject, jurisdiction, and/or student groups

The NAEP Data Explorer at  
<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nde>

**Find** information regarding the types of questions used on NAEP assessments or to view subject-specific questions

The NAEP Questions Tool at  
<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/itmrls>

**Download** a Sample Questions Booklet that contains sample test questions for the upcoming and previous assessments

The National Center for Education Statistics at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/about/booklets.asp>

**Learn** more about how policy is drafted for each NAEP assessment

The National Assessment Governing Board at  
<http://www.nagb.org>

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The National Center for Education Statistics mailbox at <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/contactus.asp>